

Mr. Chaplin will call to discuss
this with you.

JY

E.O.: N/A

Tags: PFM, XXXX, SCPN, AR, US

To: Secstate WashDC Immediate

Subject: AP Story on Ambassador's meeting with President

For AR/MCA - Rondon

Ref: Rondon/Chaplin teletex 9/23/76

1. Embassy received inquiries from most press services in RA about meeting with president. Uniform response was that any comment would have to come from President Videla. Afternoon of 9/22 (subsequent to filing of story) AP called to ask ~~press office~~ if (he) had any comment on statements attributed to "sources close to Amb Hill", and received another no comment response.

2. AP was sufficiently cooperative to provide information on source which made it possible for Embassy to identify him conclusively. There was one source, not several as story implies, and he was Robert Benjamin of [redacted]. Benjamin has long been known to Ambassador XXXX since latter's appointment to Mexico. Benjamin met with Ambassador [redacted] prior to meeting with Videla. XXXX views and statements attributed to Ambassador by Benjamin are incorrect and self-serving. Ambassador is particularly offended at implication that ~~xxxx~~ human rights issue raised only is sop to Democratic congressmen. Ambassador's position on this issue is on record in Department and was amply discussed in his recent consultation.

3. Benjamin's remarks, if correctly ^{reported} ~~interpreted~~, appear to be self-serving in that his firm has public relations contract with GOA, but has told GOA it unwilling-to be apologist for human rights violations.

4. Meeting with Videla has been fully reported in other messages. To avoid being drawn into situations/which questions about his meeting with president

Videla might be raised, Ambassador had already cancelled scheduled luncheons with American Chamber and another businessmen's group this week. Ambassador considered and rejected proposal to issue statement that AP report incorrect, in that it inevitably would elicit further questions ~~x~~ on which ~~press was~~ incorrect, ~~and possibly~~ keep this fragile ~~topic~~ in the air an additional day. In the event that circumstances further require Department to respond to questions about the story, Ambassador is ~~extremely~~ fully prepared to stand on his record on this issue, ~~having~~ only the ~~unofficial~~ statement ~~which he~~ could minimize ~~depends on~~ ~~to whom~~.

NOTE

ARGENTINA AND U.S. 96
U.S. ALSO CAN DO
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITES

BUEBOS ALVES, ARGENTINA, DEPUTY OF (AP) -- PRESIDENT FORD
SUPPORTS THE MACHINING MILITARY GOVERNMENT BUT WOULD LIKE
TO SEE IT IMPROVE ITS HUMAN RIGHTS RECORD. "FORCES CLOSE TO
TO THE U.S. AND CORDOBA," SUGGESTED HILL.

U.S. ADMIRAL ROBERT COUCH TOLD "NEWSWEEK."
FIVE LEFTIST GUERRILLA SUSPECTS WERE KILLED
BY SECURITY FORCES IN CLASHES NEAR BUENOS AIRES, MAINTAINING
THAT THE NUMBER OF POLITICAL DEATHS THIS YEAR, SECURITY
SAYS, IS 22. THAT MADE A POLITICAL AND A SOCIAL TERRORIST
SUSPECT WHO WORKED IN THE ACTION.

RAVAN, LIGHTS DOMINATED A ONE-POINT MEETING BETWEEN HILL
AND GEN. JOSE VIDELAS, THE ARGENTINE MILITARY PREIDENT,
ON THE SEAT AT THE GOVERNMENT HOUSE. THE SOURCE SAID, WHETHER
IN THE PRESIDENT'S OFFICE OR THE U.S. EMBASSY SAID THAT WAS
DISCLOSED.

(THEIR S.D. CHIEF
SAID HIS SIGHT IS.

FMS 13:15 EDT 28/PT 21.

Convey to 62 term if HQ2 is prob.
with out update HQ2

H316

ARGENTINA WIL THREE TAKES TOTAL 400

BY ALTONSO CHADY

ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

SANTIAGO, ARGENTINA, Sept. 14 (AP)--PRESIDENT FORD SUPPORTS THE ARGENTINE MILITARY GOVERNMENT BUT WOULD LIKE TO SEE IT IMPROVE ITS HUMAN RIGHTS RECORD, ROUNDED CLOSE TO U.S. AMBASSADOR ROBERT HILL SAID YESTERDAY.

THEY SAID THIS IS WHAT HILL TOLD GEN. JOSEF VIDELA, THE ARGENTINE MILITARY PRESIDENT, DURING A ONE-HOUR MEETING AT THE GOVERNMENT HOUSE ON YESTERDAY. NEITHER THE PRESIDENT'S OFFICE NOR THE U.S. EMBASSY SAID THAT WAS DISCUSSED.

THE SOURCES SAID THAT HILL TOLD VIDELA THAT THE FORD ADMINISTRATION SUPPORTS MILITARY LEADERS BUT THAT SOME DEMOCRATIC CONGRESSMAN HAVE BEEN PUTTING PRESSURE TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT CHARGES OF HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS HERE.

THEY SAID THE PRESSURE INCREASED AFTER LAST MONTH'S ARREST AND SUBSEQUENT DEPORTATION OF A U.S. ROMAN CATHOLIC PRIEST AND LAST WEEK'S ARMED ABDUCTION OF AN AMERICAN MUNICIPAL CHIEF.

THE SOURCES DID NOT SAY THAT VIDELA TOLD HILL A U.S. EMBASSY SPECIALIST DECLINED COMMENT AND DESCRIBED THE MEETING AS "NOTHING UNUSUAL."

IN WASHINGTON, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE MEMBER BY REP. DONALD FRAYER, D-MICH., HAS SCHEDULED HEARINGS ON HUMAN RIGHTS IN ARGENTINA BEGINNING NEXT THURSDAY.

APR 10:30 EST SEPT 14

HO17C

BUENOS AIRES ARGENTINE NL H316 ADD: YESTERDAY.

THE HEMISPHERIC AFFAIRS COUNCIL, A WASHINGTON-BASED GROUP OF LIBERALS INCLUDING SOME SUPPORTERS OF DEMOCRATIC PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE JIMMY CARTER, HAS URGED CONGRESS TO CUT OFF MILITARY AND ECONOMIC AID TO ARGENTINA.

LATE FRIDAY THE ARGENTINE AMBASSADOR TO WASHINGTON, ADALDO BESICH, DESIGNED AND DIPLOMATIC SOURCES SAID THE REASON WAS HE COULD NO LONGER STAND PRESSURES FROM LIBERAL U.S. GROUPS OVER HUMAN RIGHTS.

THE HUMAN RIGHTS CHARGES STEM FROM LIBERALS AND LEFTISTS WHO SAY LEFT-WING TERRORISTS IN ARGENTINA, BLAMED FOR HUNDREDS OF ABDUCTIONS AND MURDERS THIS YEAR, ARE REALLY MILITARY OR POLICE OFFICIES CONDUCTING A REPRISAL CAMPAIGN AGAINST LEFTIST OVER LEFT-WING CUEVILLA ATTACKS. THE GOVERNMENT DENIES IT.

IN THE LATEST ACTION, THE ARGENTINE ACTORT GUILD "AID FOUR ACTORS, ALL LITTLE KNOWN, HAVE DISAPPEARED FROM THEIR HOME AND MAY HAVE BEEN KIDNAPPED. KEE'S CIRCLE ALSO SAID THAT FOUR JOURNALISTS, INCLUDING TWO EDITORS, HAVE BEEN ARRESTED IN THE PROVINCE.

THE FAMILY OF THE KIDNAPPED AMERICAN WOMAN, PATRICIA ERB, 19, OF JACKSON, MISS., SAID THEY STILL HAD NO NEWS OF HER. 10 DAYS AFTER SHE WAS TAKEN FROM HER FAMILY HOME IN BUENOS AIRES BY ARMED MEN WHOM HER FATHER, DESCRIBED AS POLICEMEN, HER FATHER JOHN D. ERB, A METHODIST PARSON FROM MISSISSIPPI, HAS BEEN IN ARGENTINA FOR THE LAST 25 YEARS.

ARG 12:16 EDT SEPT 29.

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Buenos Aires Argentine NL H317 : Years

NO. 1 PATINET HAS SAID THE UAR APPARENTLY INVOLVED WITH LEFTIST GROUPS AT THE NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF BUENOS AIRES, WHICH MAY HAVE HAD LINKED TO MARXIST CHIMARRA.

WHICH MAY HAVE BEEN HARMFUL TO THEM AND DECEIVED THE REV. JAMES E. TEEKE, THE PASTOR OF A BAPTIST CHURCH IN EASTWOOD, CONNECTICUT, FOR SEVEN WEEKS. THE LASALLE BOVITIATE IN EASTWOOD, CONNECTICUT, WAS ACCUSED OF BEING A SHURE-ONE SITE. THE U.S. GOVERNMENT FILED A FORMAL PETITION WITH THE MILITARY REGIME BECAUSE TEKEE WAS HELD IN COMMUNICATED. ONE DAY AFTER THE MILITARY OVERTURNED THE GOVERNMENT, THE MILITARY
REMOVED TEKEE FROM EASTWOOD.

EARLIER THIS YEAR, ONE DAY AFTER THE MILITARY OVERTURE AND ANTECEDENT ISRAELI PERSON IN A BLOODYLESS COUP LAST MARCH 24, TWO WEST GERMAN DISAPPEARED AND HAVE NOT BEEN HEARD FROM. WEST GERMAN SOURCES HERE SAY THEY MAY HAVE BEEN KIDNAPPED AND KILLED BY HIGHMATES. - MEANWHILE, EIGHTS OVER

RECENTLY KIDNAPPED AND KILLED BY TIGHTENED SECURITY. LOCAL FINANCIAL CIRCLES FEAR THAT THE HUMAN RIGHTS CHARGE COULD AFFECT INTERNATIONAL LOANS TO THIS COUNTRY. INSTITUTE FOR ELECTRICAL PROJECTS ON TUESDAY, THE GOVERNMENT SAID. END (CHARITY).

Page 15 of 30 EDT SUPT 564

RJG

Buenos Aires Argentinean Mois Adel "Adel".
In Cordoba Argentina's second largest city and industrial
center 300 miles to the north west, troops peacefully seized
a Milan plane of the Italian-owned Fiat automobile and aircraft
factory described as leftist activists, the army said.
It said one of the men was picked up while passing out
leaflets of the left-wing Peronist Montonero Guerrillas and
the other three were detained when trying to start a strike.

(END, CHABY)

HAG17:19EST 09-12-76

CONTROLLING NUMBER 6177
21 SEP 76 1836

TELEGRAM

INDICATE
 COLLECT
 CHARGE TO

FROM American Embassy BUENOS AIRES CLASSIFICATION CONFIDENTIAL

E.O.11652:
TAGS: GDS
SUBJECT: PPOR, SHUM, AR, US
My Call on President Videla

ACTION: Secstate WASHDC IMMEDIATE

AMERICAN EMBASSY BUENOS AIRES NUMBER 6177

AMB DCM
POL-3
CONE
LEGAT
DAO
POL/R
CHRON

1. I called on President Videla at Casa Rosada this morning at 11:15 and spent almost 1 1/2 hours with him. A report on our discussion of US-Argentine relations--especially with respect to human rights issue--will follow by septel. Points of immediate interest were as follows:

2. President Videla apologized and said he was not yet in a position to give me the name of the new Ambassador to the United States. He did say, however, that it would not be General Miro as several radio and press reports here indicated this morning. He said he hoped to have the name soon and would inform the Embassy as soon as possible (note: Mrs. Musich called my wife this morning before following her husband to Washington. She expressed sorrow upon cutting short their assignment, and said her only regret was that she and her husband had not been able to complete his mission).

DRAFTED BY: POL:WESMITH:CC 125 DRAFTING DATE: 9/21/76 TEL. EXT: 126 CONTENTS AND CLASSIFICATION APPROVED BY:

CLEARANCES: AMB:RCHILL H

A/DCM:WBeal

3. Gwenda Mae Loken Case. I discussed the Loken case with President Videla, pointing out to him the extremely difficult conditions under which she is being held and the fact that she is pregnant. The President responded that Interior Minister has given instructions for the judicial process to be terminated quickly, i.e. for there to be a speedy trial and sentencing. When that is done, he assured me, she will be expelled from the country immediately under order of executive decree.

4. Patricia Erb Case. I also pressed the President for any news concerning Patricia Erb. The President said that GOA has not been able to find any trace of her and has no idea where she is. He promised, however, to stay in contact and to notify me immediately of any new developments in the case. He indicated that when she is found (if she is found) GOA will expel her from the country (and he implied that it would do so before any judicial process might be initiated).


HILL